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HOW TO GET MUSCULAR.

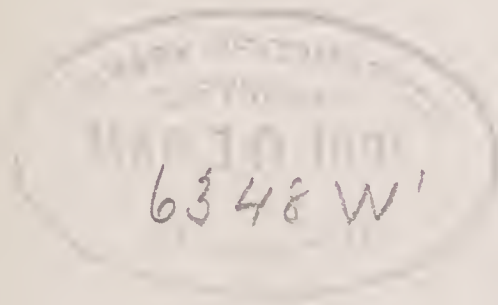
FIVE ADDRESSES ON HIGHER
ATHLETICS.

✓ BY

CHARLES WADSWORTH, JR.

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· "I beseech you to be well." — EMERSON.



NEW YORK :

ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY,

38 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET.

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TO THE

Memory of my Father,

CHARLES WADSWORTH, D.D.,

who will ever stand out in the thought of all who knew him as
"a strong man,"

THESE ADDRESSES ARE DEDICATED.

NOTE.

There can be no doubt that Athletics is to-day the leading topic among young men. Being a young man myself, and an enthusiast in the matter of exercise, I look at the question, so to speak, from the inside. The aim of these addresses has been to emphasize a few of the ideas which this interesting subject suggests.

NORTH BROAD STREET CHURCH,
PHILADELPHIA, January, 1891.

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I.

STRENGTH.

“A strong man.”

—PSALMS xix. 5.

STRENGTH.

THE idol of to-day is muscle. The multitude worships a great biceps. The Israelites bowed down before a calf of gold ; to-day it is a calf of flesh that receives the homage of the public. Hercules is the popular deity. A prize-fight eclipses even a scandal in our regard. And where three care for grand music, and where two care for art, and where one cares for truth, ten thousand will be deeply interested in base-ball. We are not a musical people, we are not an artistic people, we are not a philosophic people. We are a gymnastic people. The dumb-bell and the boxing-glove ought to be woven upon our flag.

This spirit has penetrated even the strongholds of culture, and in the halls where Minerva once held sway, Hercules will now be found enshrined. The principal topic of conversation

among college men is foot-ball. The smaller colleges take grade according to their records in competitive games. The prominent undergraduates are those who can run or row. And, without exaggeration, we may say that, in some cases, students have been superseded by jumping-jacks.

Against the importance and desirability of athletics I have not a word to say. No one can rejoice more heartily than myself in the wisdom which cares for the body and its development. I am thankful that we have advanced beyond the days when neglect of the body was regarded as an evidence of piety. If Carlyle had not suffered so from dyspepsia, his work would have been more valuable. Generally speaking, a man who has a diseased body has diseased thoughts. The helpful men have been healthful men. Charles Dickens could walk astounding distances; Gladstone is physically a giant. We know little of Shakespeare, but I am confident that his sublime intellect was not trou-

bled with bodily ailments. The basis of our existence in this world is physical. If the foundation totters the superstructure cannot be firm. We cannot exaggerate the importance of the bodily life; and too much care cannot be taken of it.

The prevailing enthusiasm for athletics is a much-needed reaction from a most unwise indifference. The last generation neglected physical development. It, perhaps, did not matter so much years ago, for a large proportion of the young men of the land were then raised upon farms. They found their gymnasium in the harvest field and behind the plow. Milking developed their grip, and pitching hay developed their shoulders. Instead of swinging Indian clubs they sawed wood; and instead of pulling chest-weights they hoed corn. This is after all the best of methods. Constitutions built up by such exercises have a toughness of fibre and power of endurance which no gymnasium can impart. It was such a system of athletics that gave Webster and Choate their superb strength.

To-day, however, the conditions are changed. The thousands of young men in great cities do not swing flails or mow grass. They are cramped in artificial and unfavorable circumstances. Our system of school life keeps them many hours in badly ventilated rooms. Their most active out-of-door exercise is carrying a huge cane on Chestnut Street. Instead of pure air they breathe cigarette-smoke and sewer-gas. Under such conditions it is a kind Providence that has brought athletics into such prominence and awakened such an interest in physical development in the hearts of our young men. I am glad of it. I recognize its necessity. I have great hopes for its results. It will greatly increase the health and happiness and usefulness of the coming generations. Whatever adds an inch to man's shoulders adds a year to his life. Whatever increases his chest measurement increases his power for good. The gymnasium of to-day will cure, or what is better will prevent, the dyspepsia of

to-morrow. If the past generation had taken more exercise, the present generation would be taking fewer pills. So far as I had any influence I would use it among all young people to interest them in physical development. A vigorous and healthy bodily life is something that may be lost by neglect, and, to a degree at least, secured and established by the energetic observance of well-known laws. I am glad that the spirit of athletics is busy among our young men enlarging muscles, broadening shoulders, deepening chests. The result will be a finer race, and that paragon of animals, that noblest result of the ages—"a strong man."

While thus I am heartily in sympathy with this spirit and bid it God-speed on its mission, nevertheless I am not blind to certain absurdities and extravagances which are committed in its name. Athletics is altogether desirable. But *athletics gone mad* is not so entirely admirable. The danger lies not in development,

but in one-sided development. The object should be not merely to increase strength. A strong *brute* is not a worthy achievement. "A strong *man*" is the result to be desired. There are two things to be secured—*muscle and manhood, strength and character*. If either is developed without the other, we have only a monstrosity on our hands. Strength without character is revolting. Character without strength is pitiable. The two need to be blended together. The character needs to be permeated with strength, and the strength needs to be shaped by the character. The manhood needs to be muscular, and the muscle needs to be manly. Each must be full of the other. When thus blended, they represent two things which God has joined together; and in their combination they produce the grandest earthly being, "a strong man."

The root of manhood is strength, and the flower of strength is manhood. They are both present in the complete growth of a true life.

In such a life we have strength in every part of the nature. This fibrous quality which avails for work, for endurance, for attack, for resistance will be found not only in the arms, but also in the intellect; in the will no less than in the muscles. Every faculty is thus vitalized with power. The individual is strong in every part, and at the same time all this strength is permeated with character. He is not a strong savage. He is "a strong man."

We find what I am trying to describe in Jesus of Nazareth. Physically He must have been full of power. Long journeys were continually made, long vigils endured. His arms had been hardened in the carpenter-shop at Nazareth. No weakling could have taken a scourge of small cords and driven out the money-changers and dove-sellers from the temple, overturning the tables and sweeping everything before him. Horrible mediæval paintings and disgusting shrines have presented to the world a sorry figure, and fixed

upon the world's heart the idea that the King of Men was insignificant and frail, not to say monstrous, in His anatomy. For such a conception we have to thank the vile imaginations of worthless monks. There is no ground for such an idea. Indeed, there are facts concerning His life which can be explained only on the supposition that physically He was "a strong man."

We are interested particularly, however, in noting how this fibrous virility characterized His mind and will no less than His body. He had a muscular brain. He stood out in this in marked contrast to the Pharisees and Scribes, and, indeed, to most men of His time. The minds of those around Him were flimsy. They thought childish thoughts. They moved in the old rut of orthodox tradition. They were steeped in human creeds. They were incapable of original work. They swallowed dogmas whole, and produced only dreary platitudes. They were so besotted in their stagnation that

they preferred their old falsehoods to new truth. Indeed, they hated truth—they could not receive it. They were so warped with prejudice that they loved the darkness of their traditional creed, and bitterly antagonized any new discovery. Such were the minds of the men among whom Jesus worked. Their minds were flabby, like clams encrusted in impervious shells—unable to advance, unable to understand new ideas.

There was an infinite difference between such minds and the mind of Jesus. The multitudes at once felt the difference. “They marvelled at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.” His mind was muscular—well-knit, fibrous, vitalized with strength. He did not teach them tradition, He taught them truth. He did not deal with dead dogmas, He dealt with living reality. His intellect was not imprisoned in an artificial theory. It was out in the Infinite Universe, face to face with the final mystery. It did not

waste its time juggling with theological subtleties and theories, it grappled immediately with the great problems of Being. That is the test and evidence of a muscular brain. A strong intellect does not continue repeating by rote the dogmas of a dead and ignorant past. A strong intellect leaves the dead past to bury its own dead systems of thought, and for itself in the new light of living discoveries it feels the pulse of the universe. That was what Jesus did. He taught not what He had been told by men, but what He had Himself discovered in God. He was not a mere repeater. He was an investigator. He taught what was called heresy, but He taught truth. His brain was not flimsy, it was muscular; and no more complete testimony could be desired to the vigor of His mind than the way in which the fossilized bigots hated the truth which He taught. It is the highest compliment that can be paid to a thinker when such men call him "a blasphemer."

But not only was the intellect of Jesus filled with strength ; His will also was grandly muscular. It was marked by tenacity of purpose, fixedness of resolution, and irresistible power of action. It fills me with wonder and awe. I worship it, convinced that it was Divine. Think what it resisted, what temptations it overcame, what allurements it defied, what oppositions it cut through. Calmly, without a tremor of hesitation, in silence, in loneliness, in darkness, in bitter grief, it marched to the horror of Golgotha. It had in it the strength of eternity. It was the mightiest essence that ever moved upon the world. As I look at it and see what it did among Pharisees and on the mountain, in the city and before the judgment-seat of Pilate, through the agony and along the way to Calvary, I say, " Truly this was the Son of God."

I may not spend time in analyzing further. The same commanding strength throbbed through every part of the nature of Jesus

Christ. In mind and will, and heart and soul we discern that fibrous quality which we call muscularity, and which is one of the few things that our age reverences. At the same time in Him we see this strength permeated and shaped by character. The muscularity is filled with manhood. "A strong man," that which our generation in a vague and ignorant way worships and which it loves, that is here held up before it. Here is what men regard as noble and desirable! Here is a development! Here is a complete result. Here is "a strong man." Here are unequalled achievements. Here is a mind that discovered and proclaimed truths which eighteen centuries have not fathomed, and which contain the best and only solutions for the problems and difficulties of to-day. Here is a will that overcame temptation, and mastered the world, and remained steadfast and unshaken in death. Match me these achievements. You admire strength! Turn your eye upon this life. What do you think

of it? The Church for eighteen hundred years has told us that this is the life by which we are to be saved; that this "strong man" is the "conqueror from Edom," the "captain of salvation"; and that "to as many as receive Him, to them gives He power to become the sons of God, even to those who believe on His name."

Let us not develop ourselves one-sidedly and only in one direction. Let us make our development an all-round development. Let us carry our athletics into the spheres of mind and will, as well as body. Of course we desire physical development. I feel a great enthusiasm for large and hard muscles. I think the Indian club is one of God's ministers to this generation. A gymnasium has more of God in it than a convent. Make your shoulders as broad as possible. If you can hope for a thirty-six inch chest, do not be satisfied with one measuring thirty-two inches. The additional four inches will add to your happiness and usefulness. But never forget that there is

more of you than flesh and blood. Remember that while the body is an essential part, it is not the only nor the noblest part. There are other natures in you grander and more wonderful which ought not to be neglected. The brain is worth more than the biceps; the will is more precious than the fore-arm. Our ambition should be not merely to be strong, but to be strong men—to have muscular intellects and broad-shouldered wills. I like a mind that has a tremendous grip, that can carry a large load, and make a long journey, and not give out before the first mile is covered. I like a mind that can sometimes do rapid work, and, when need arises, can spurt a hundred-yard dash in ten seconds. I would rather be able to leap mentally to the height of a great conception or thought, than to leap physically six feet into the air.

Then, too, what a grand thing it is to have a will whose knees are not weak, and whose backbone is not made of pulp; a will which can

put its foot down and say "Yes!" or "No!" a will that can wade, if need be, across weary sands, and breast torrents, and climb over mountains. I would rather have a will that could wrestle like Jacob's, and resolve like Napoleon's, and persevere like Washington's, than to be able to lift a thousand pounds or to swim across the English Channel.

Do there not open before us vistas of manhood when we study the problem of development? Are these not fascinating possibilities? Is not this the most interesting of all subjects? Now this is what is meant by following Jesus. It is not to retire from this world and go out from life. It is to enter more largely and abundantly into life. "I am come," said Jesus, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." You are invited to develop yourself. You are invited to follow "a strong man." Jesus of Nazareth was a great mental and spiritual athlete. No one can follow Jesus

by sitting in a pew and singing, "Oh! to be nothing." We have to stand on our feet, to gird up our loins, to wrestle, to run, to lift a larger weight to-morrow than we carried yesterday, to make a longer journey, to speed more rapidly around the track. Following Jesus is all-round athletics, and the man who is really following the Master is growing more and more like Him every day; broader-shouldered in mind, deeper-chested in will, step by step becoming "a strong man," advancing toward the attainment of the fulness of the stature of the sons of God.

This should be our aim, a complete development, a manhood permeated with strength, a strength controlled by manhood. Muscularity will then characterize every part of our nature; fibrous virility will knit together the loins of the intellect; sinews and thews will build themselves around the will.

II.
EXERCISE.

“Keep all the commandments that ye may be strong.”

—DEUT. xi. 8.

EXERCISE.

NOTWITHSTANDING all its complexities life is after all a very simple thing. We deal with certainties. Fire always burns, frost always bites, twice two is always four, ten pounds of force never does twenty pounds of work. The same result may always be predicted from the same conditions. And no result will come if the conditions are not arranged. If the water is not hot, the egg will not cook. If the seed is not sown, it will bear no harvest. If the horse is not fed, he cannot pull. If we wish to obtain some result, there are certain things we must do. All things move according to law, along very definite paths. If, therefore, an end is desired, the path must be discovered over which forces will move toward that end, and that path must be laid out. If this be done, the result will follow. If it be not done, the

result will not follow. It is vain to expect an effect without a cause, or to hope for any issue unless the essential conditions have been observed. Such is our world, and so I say that life in such a world is very simple. It becomes entirely a question of arrangement or observance. Do I want corn? I must plant, and I must plant a particular sort of seed. It will not do to plant anything. I will not get corn if I plant peas. The world is very exacting. She will give me plenty of corn, but only on one condition, I must plant corn. Do I desire to become a scholar? Then, too, I must observe certain conditions. It is not enough that I have a high ideal of scholarship, it is not enough that I desire to become learned. I might sit and reverence such an ideal, and cherish such desires forever without obtaining the result. I must observe some very definite conditions. I must study, I must work. It is very simple, the whole secret is obedience; if I obey, if I observe the conditions, the result

follows. If I kindle the fire, the house is warmed ; if I water the plant, it will grow.

We desire to become strong. Here is a definite aim and purpose. How may it be attained? How can I get strong? It is the same old simple problem. Certain conditions must be arranged and observed, and the result will follow. If I obey these regulations the wished-for issue will come. As Moses expressed it—"Keep all the commandments, that thou mayst be strong." It becomes simply a question as to what these conditions are. Discover them and observe them, and the result is secure.

In the brief inquiry which I shall make, it is not physical strength solely or principally that I shall have in view. Strength of mind and strength of will seem to me vastly more important than mere strength of body, and it is with them that I am mainly concerned. We shall find, however, that here as always the Physical is a parable of the Spiritual ; and that

it suggests and reveals the secrets which we desire to know. Our question is—How can I get strong? What must I do? What conditions must I observe? What commandments must I keep? The first of these conditions which I would note is *exercise*. Exercise is essential. No man ever built up a good muscle without exercise. A splendid biceps never came to a man who merely sat down and prayed for it. A full rounded chest is the result not of meditation, or aspiration, or worship alone. It never comes without work. Nothing can take the place of exercise. Medicine cannot, electricity cannot. No one even pretends to have invented a pill which will make men broad-shouldered. The man who desires a substantial grip must make the acquaintance of the dumb-bell. Indian clubs are the only seeds which produce a crop of well-knit, flexible shoulder-caps. Another man's exercising will not do me any good. I might hire a man to train for me. His putting up

weights would not enlarge my arm. All this is simple and plain enough in physical matters; and yet even in this sphere it is worth our thoughtful consideration. As a people we do not exercise enough. Sometimes I almost wish that our religion enjoined upon its professors the making of pilgrimages. Every human being ought in his life to walk as far as at least once around the world, to climb as high as its loftiest mountain, and to swim as far as the width of its widest river. Posterity would thank us if we would do our duty in this matter. Extravagance in shoe-leather is the strictest economy. Fairmount Park is a greater blessing to this generation than even the store-windows on Chestnut Street. If it were visited by our citizens as frequently as their smaller and less beautiful parks are visited by the inhabitants of European cities, it would do a work invaluable and measureless.

Applying these well-known truths and principles to spiritual spheres, we repeat, strength

of mind and will can be secured only by exercise. Work alone will build up muscularity of brain and character.

The essence of exercise is the overcoming of resistance; this is done in two ways. The muscle is used to lift some external weight, or the body itself is made the weight and the muscle is made to lift that. In either case the muscle is set over against the attraction of gravity and compelled to pull in opposition to it. In a word, exercise is a tug-of-war between the world and the individual. The apparatus may vary widely, but always it will be found that there is a rope with the earth at one end and the man on the other. They pull against each other, and the man gets his exercise by overcoming the resistance which the earth offers to his movement. A gymnasium is simply a room in which by ingenious arrangements the earth and the man are placed in opposition to each other.

Man's mind and will find plenty of resistance

in the world. It is indeed a great mental and moral gymnasium. It is prepared exactly to afford men that exercise which is essential for their development and strength. When we analyze the conditions we find that there is, so to speak, a rope; the man's mind or will is at one end, the world is at the other. The man's part is to pull against the world. He must make a weight go up while the world tries to drag it down. In this way he gets the necessary exercise. A problem is, so to speak, a mental chest-weight. We can solve it only as we pull on the rope. No problem solves itself. The simplest example in addition must be worked out by the child. The answer does not come until he compels it to. He has to pull on the rope if he would find the sum. The cube root of any quantity does not come out and show itself to us of its own accord. It lies away down, hidden and unknown, and we have to tug very hard to bring it up from its concealment. So of every problem, the solution

is like the weight at the other end of the rope. We have to overcome resistance to get the answer. Sometimes the weight to be lifted is ourselves. The world by its attraction of gravitation lays hold upon our lower nature. It pulls us downward. We incline toward evil. Here is exercise for the will. We must lift ourselves up in spite of the downward drawing of the earth. Here the struggle begins. We resolve to do good, immediately evil is present with us. We pull, the world pulls at the same time. We find we are very heavy. It is exactly like a boy trying to climb up on a bar. The earth pulls him down, he pulls himself up. It is a question whether the earth will master him, or he the earth. This is our great conflict, shall we lift ourselves up? Or shall the world drag us down? We are confronted with opposition; we are compelled to overcome resistance. This affords abundant exercise.

We are placed in a great mental and moral gymnasium, wherein are all manner of appa-

ratus. All sorts of problems confront our minds: practical problems relating to our business and our daily bread; political problems relating to our social system, our government, methods and policies of administration; personal problems; speculative problems; religious problems. Weights of all sizes are here. Lifting these weights is the exercise that will bring development and strength to the mind. Here, too, are innumerable exercises for the will. Every variety of resistance presents itself in the world and must be overcome. There is the resistance arising from opposing interests, the resistance arising from general conditions, the resistance arising from evil. The most ingeniously constructed apparatus in a physical gymnasium are not so complete or numerous. The will is encircled with struggles. It pulls against the world in all ways. It ought to develop broad shoulders, a huge biceps, and a grip like steel.

If we desire to become strong we must take

advantage of these arrangements and appliances. We must solve problems, and grapple with difficulties. There is no other way to build up muscle.

In thus exercising in this gymnasium we must be careful not to make mistakes. Very often I have seen an ignorant, thoughtless man come into a gymnasium and begin unwisely, and do himself only injury. I have seen little, undeveloped boys try to put up very heavy dumb-bells. I have seen a man with very small arms spend all of his time on the running-track. He needed development in another direction. I have seen men break their arms by experimenting on the trapeze. Injudicious exercise will not make us strong.

1. The exercise needs to be *gradual*. Do not try the hardest things first. Lifting one pound fits us to lift two. There are men who fly at the highest problems. They do not seem to understand that the mind needs training and discipline before it will be able to lift the

heaviest weights. It is not well to try to walk fifty miles the first time we stand on our feet. As a rule, we all are too eager to try the hundred-pound dumb-bells. We take hold of unsolvable problems, not content to exercise ourselves with those simple ones which we are fitted to handle. The will too should be exercised gradually. God sets before it first of all the simplest exercise. It is not confronted with the whole big world and expected at first to lift that. Such an achievement would be impossible. God gives the will a task which it can perform. He says to the man, "Give me thy heart." The will tries to lift the heart up to God; then the earth draws the heart downward, and the will has to struggle against the earth. But this is something which the will can do: it can choose, it can decide. It overcomes the world in a little matter first, and so develops strength to overcome it in greater matters hereafter. It is only as the exercise is gradual that it will make us strong.

2. Then, too, it needs to be *selective*. Each man is strongest in some particular direction. Every one has his forte. In another direction he will be weak. He needs development on his weak side. Instructors in gymnásiums to-day study individuals. They examine and analyze a man and prescribe the exercise he especially needs. "A's" back and arms may require development, he is put to work on the weights. "B's" arms may be massive and his legs almost invisible, the running-track is the place for him. The exercise must be selective and must develop the undeveloped parts and powers. If we were dealing with a giraffe it would be foolish to arrange movements to enlarge the neck. The giraffe does not need development in that direction. A donkey's ears do not require special attention; no enlargement is desirable. The peacock's tail is not a weak point demanding encouragement. With some the tongue does not need any special exercise. It is sufficiently muscular. It is not suffering from any

under-development. It is very much stronger than the prudence or the good nature. These latter may be the weak points which need to be strengthened by exercise.

With regard to the mind, it might be the memory that needed training, or it might be the logical faculty, or it might be the perceptive powers. In either case the exercise should be selected with a view to the needs in order that the undeveloped part might be developed. So, too, of the will, it might be weak in judgment, or in decision, or in resolution. It might require the exercise of responsibility, or of opposition, or of adversity.

In His dealings with human beings the All-wise Spirit orders the experiences, and arranges the changes for a life with selective care. The object is to strengthen by exercise the undeveloped powers. Have we seen it in our own history? We have been in a great gymnasium, and the Master has given us now the chest-weight and now the rings. At one time we have been compelled to carry burdens, and at

another to lift ourselves. The aim has been to overcome weakness, that "the child of God might be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." And while undoubtedly the experience was often very trying and we went heavily in grief and bitterness, is it not true that the experience was most beneficial and greatly needed? And are we not to-day glad for the development which has come out of the adversity in which we were then exercised?

3. We see, therefore, that this exercise must be *varied*. No point perhaps calls for more emphasis than this. The development which results from one single movement continually repeated is only a deformity. A man who has nothing but an arm is a monstrosity. There are more than five hundred muscles in the human body; the exercise which makes "a strong man" must be a varied exercise, it must bring every one of these five hundred muscles into play. Manhood should not be developed hemispherically or in sections. The arms are not

enlarged first and then, subsequently, the back attended to. All must work and grow together. The tree does not first build fibre and then afterward weave bark.

Unfortunately our age is strongly specializing in its influence. It employs only one faculty in a man. It keeps him, for example, working in a coal-mine, or watching a loom in a factory, or driving a street-car. The particular faculty which is used thus continually in his daily employment increases abnormally, but at the same time his other faculties shrink through disuse and become atrophied. He becomes a monstrosity, having one muscle enormous and hard, while his other muscles are almost palsied. Nothing is more belittling to human nature than narrowness of exercise. Here is a man who never reads anything but newspapers ; he gets what may be called a "newspaper brain." Here is a man whose mind works only along business lines ; in reverence, in refinement, in knowledge, in love for art, and indeed in all

the higher, nobler faculties, he becomes withered, a pitiable deformity. The world compels us all to work, we all have to take exercise. The great trouble is that the work is not varied. Exercise which brings into play only one faculty will not make "a strong man," it will make only a one-sided deformity. Most of us are specialists, little creatures having one disproportionately large muscle. A dwarf with withered limbs and having a monstrous biceps might stand as the type of multitudes to-day.

What is needed to make strong men is varied exercise. Do not let your specialty swallow you up. If in the world you are all the while exercising your cunning and shrewdness, take time to exercise your taste for literature, your love for art, your desire for music. Above all, take time to exercise your faculty of reverence for Truth. What we see to-day is men developing their meaner powers with greatest eagerness, their greed, their selfishness, their coarseness, their deceitfulness; these grow very

strong in the battle for existence. But the nobler powers which inhere in manhood, the powers seen in such men as Shakespeare, and Wordsworth, and Tennyson, these are neglected, they wither as a muscle withers when never used. What is the result? A curious creature having enormous cunning and not the least refinement, great shrewdness and no particle of reverence. As we gaze upon such individuals we find the old question rising to our lips: "What shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" What must life be to the man whose better powers have all become atrophied and who is conscious only of the meanest faculties of his nature? Varied exercise, that is what is needed to-day. And there are the most abundant opportunities for it. I am impressed with the variety of exercise which the universe provides. I have said it is a great gymnasium. In it there are contrivances which will give exercise to every power of man's mind. Loveliest land-

scapes appeal to man's sense of beauty; the smiling valley encircled with silent mountains, the green meadow brilliant with flowers, the crystal stream over which great trees spread their branches, floating clouds, whispering winds, billowing oceans, rippling lakes; do not all these give exercise to man's æsthetic powers? Do they not develop his refined and artistic nature? And with its sublime sunrises and sunsets, its grandly solemn nights, its hosts of stars, its silent mystery, is it not calling the reverence of the soul into play? Let us vary the exercise. Why should cunning be the only power developed? Let us come out into the midnight and learn to worship. Let us grow in reverence by gazing upon the splendid mystery about us. Varied exercise will develop complete manhood.

4. Lastly, this exercise needs to be *regular*. Spasmodic exercise never developed strength. I knew a man who came about once in six weeks to the gymnasium, and tried in that one

visit to take exercise enough for all the rest of the time. He worked on every machine and used every apparatus. The result was not "a strong man," but an exhausted man. Spasmodic exertion never developed a brain. Not infrequently in college, men are found who idle all through the course, and work inhumanly at examination seasons. Nothing is more useless and hardly anything is more injurious. The men of strong intellects have built up their strength by regular exercise. Every day some weight was lifted, some power used, some problem pondered. Napoleon had a passion for mental activity. He endeavored to learn some new truth every day. As a minister of the Gospel I feel that I have a mission to men's minds. A man cannot be saved unless he is saved all round. The mind needs saving, and here too "Faith without works is dead." Regular mental exercise will make the brain muscular, and win for it the strength so much to be desired. Strength of will, too, is the result

not of spasmodic but of regular activity. We do not meet the adversary now and then in pitched battles, and overcome the world by some special and widely separated efforts. It is a daily and an hourly struggle, and only as we are ever engaged in it do we win. To come to church once a month, to pray once a week, to read the Word now and then, to try to do right only during Lent, all this is spasmodic. It never made a will muscular. The strength of the will of Jesus was built up by regular exercise, taken every day. And many of His parables illustrate and emphasize the necessity of this feature. It is the man who is watchful who is ready. It is the man who perseveres who prevails. It is the man who endures who is saved. Every day let us make the effort, every day let us open our hearts and give them anew and more completely to God. Every day let us resist the allurements. Every day let us lift ourselves higher in spite of the world. Every day let us reach for a

truer manhood, and try to come nearer to the Man of Men. We will find thus that regular exercise in which our wills will become strong.

III.

REST AND FOOD.

“They sat down, and did eat.”

—ST. MARK vi. 40, 42.

REST AND FOOD.

IN the sixth chapter of St. Mark's Gospel we read of a multitude who were exhausted, and who needed to have their strength renewed. Under the direction of Jesus they did two things, "they sat down," and "they did eat." The scene suggests two answers to the question which we have proposed to ourselves, "How to get strong." There are two things which will help to increase and assure our strength, *rest and food*. We, like this multitude, need to sit down, and also to eat.

We cannot get strong without rest. In my last address I emphasized the importance of exercise, observing that without it muscle could not be developed. In this address I desire to emphasize the importance of rest, for without rest vitality and vigor cannot be built up. We live in an age characterized by contradictions.

On the one hand, there are those in it who do not take enough exercise. On the other hand, there are those who do not take enough rest. Our generation seems made up of those who loaf, and those who overwork; those who do nothing, and those who do too much. It is an age of extremes. Some have muscles withered through disuse, and others have muscles strained and broken from over-taxing. The bodies of some are, so to speak, festering from stagnation. The bodies of others are being consumed by raging fires. The one-half are drones, and the other half are drudges. The one class needs to have the Gospel of Work preached to them. The other class needs to hear the Gospel of Rest. Some are weak through inactivity, and some are weak through over-exertion. We hardly realize how large a class this latter class is. Our country and generation suffer from this malady. There is undoubtedly something in our climate stimulating to the nervous system. One of the early settlers in New England

declared that a breath of Boston air was equal to a draught of old English ale. Our atmosphere is exhilarating. Its clear days, when they occur, are dazzlingly clear. There is a keenness about them which seems to act immediately upon the nerves. In addition to this, the conditions of our life to-day are more exacting than ever before. Our civilization is all stress and strain. Individual competition has been pushed to the bursting point. The safety-valve has been shut, and oil has been poured upon the fires. Our system is like a great task-master, early every morning it summons men to labor by the strident blasts of the steam-whistle; and all day long it drives them to their tasks. Never in any preceding age was man compelled to wrestle with such anxieties, or carry such a burden of cares, or struggle with such competitions as to-day. It is a battle for existence fought with all the improved appliances of modern slaughter and warfare. Under the stress of such conditions the individual

rushes unreasonably around, and does the work of two. He is driven by a remorseless task-master. Two things thus combine to over-tax men to-day. The climate, by an inward spur, stimulates them to over-exertion ; and our civilization, by its outward compulsions, lashes them to overwork. The old car of Juggernaut used to be dragged along the road, and pious believers cast themselves before it and were crushed into dust. But to-day the car of civilization crushes lives a great deal more completely and sadly. The breakdowns, so amazingly frequent, are living deaths. The momentary pains of a physical destruction are not to be compared to the continued and exquisite tortures, which a life suffers when crushed by overwork. This is not something exceptional or unknown. It is something to be seen on every hand, something of daily occurrence. We are used to it. We hardly think anything of it. Now in business, now in professional life, now in the office, now in the counting-room, now in

the pulpit, the man reels and falls. We hardly take note of it. We hardly look up. "Oh," we say, "another victim of over-work! The brain, I suppose, gave way." We know that we are living unnatural lives. We know that human nature was never intended to endure such a strain. We go on, however, with our eyes shut, recklessly resigned to what we regard as unchangeable necessity. It is sad the way in which the age abuses good workmen. If they are willing and capable, they are crowded and expected to do triple duty, but not to receive triple salary; and so it is very frequently the best men who break down. It is an age which needs to have the Gospel of Rest preached to it. And I bring my message, saying to some, your "strength is to sit still." If you would get strong, the first thing which you must do is to "sit down." I, of course, am not speaking to every one. There are those who do not need any such exhortation. Especially in church life and fields, there are those who are

not suffering from overwork. But while they need to be called to activity, there are others who need to be summoned to rest.

Over-training never built up a strong constitution. I have seen many who hurt their hearts by unduly enlarging their muscles. Not a few exercise themselves into their graves. Sometimes a man increases his biceps at the expense of his system ; and ends by having a strong arm but a weak heart. There are two sorts of strength : there is the special strength of some one muscle or set of muscles ; and there is the general strength of the system. The last is what we call the constitution, and is the more important of the two. It is better to have a strong constitution than a strong little finger. If developing the latter be carried to an extreme it will injure the former. There is a sense in which it is true that exercise strengthens the particular muscles, while rest strengthens the general system. Often our "strength is to sit still," for while we are sitting still our

system grows and builds itself up. Through the hours of rest the constitution of a man fills itself with vitality. After a night's sleep the arm is not any larger, but the general vigor is greatly increased. A vacation may not add to my grip, but it adds immeasurably to my constitutional strength. With regard to the mind we will find these truths most pertinent. Rest might not increase the mind's penetration so much, but it does increase amazingly the mind's grasp of a whole subject. It makes the mind stronger all round. The brain takes a broader outlook, views things in their varied relationships more completely, and has a vastly greater general strength after a season of repose. Hammerton, in his book on "The Intellectual Life," says that a year spent in rest, in which the brain might have opportunity to expand, would be of great service to the mental life, and instead of being time thrown away, would be time profitably employed for increasing strength. This at least is certain, the man who desires to get strong

mentally must rest as well as exercise. Intellectually he, like the men in the scene before us, must sit down. I need not pause to apply this truth to the will of man. For that, also, rest is necessary. The bow needs to be unstrung if it is to retain its elasticity; kept always bent, it loses its power to rebound. There is a disease known as lock-jaw, in which the teeth close convulsively and never open. They shut with vise-like power, but it is the grip not of life, but of death. Such it seems to me is the result when the will is unceasingly exerted. It may acquire a tremendous closing power, but this is a sort of lock-jaw spasm, it is disease rather than health; it is not the strength of life, but the energy of death. The will needs to sit down now and again, it cannot become strong without rest.

So much, then, I say about the first condition suggested by the scene in St. Mark's Gospel. I turn now to observe the second condition. Man cannot get strong without

food. The multitude “sat down, and *did eat.*” Thus they renewed their vigor. It is worth our while to observe that, under the direction of Jesus, the multitude sat down while they ate. They rested while they partook of food. The Master taught men to observe hygienic conditions and to obey physiological laws. We can easily imagine how five thousand men would be fed to-day. There would be a long counter too high to be comfortable and too low to be convenient. It would be covered with a variety of indigestible compounds, from the wrought-iron sandwich to the sole-leather pie. A railroad train would come sweeping up to the spot, and a chorus of conductors would vociferate, “Five minutes for refreshments!” A gong would thunder and the crowd would rush pell-mell, making a wild descent upon the lunch-counter. There they would stand most uneasily, with rolling eyes and alert ears, and while locomotives snorted and bells clanged, while the air was full of smoke and unpleasant-

ness, they would nervously bite off great bulks of indigestion, feeling that each mouthful might be their last, and ready all the while to rush back to the train. After a few moments the conductors would cry "All aboard!" and the crowd would scramble out in hot haste to the cars. This sort of a performance goes on every day all over our country; and, indeed, there are hundreds of business men who take their lunches after a method almost as bad. They snatch their food and rush. Thousands to-day eat on the run. It is not surprising that dyspepsia is a national disease, or that so many pale, anxious faces are to be seen upon our streets. A more effectual method could not be devised for making men weak and undermining their health. As contrasted with such customs and habits, consider, if you please, the way in which Jesus directed the multitude to dispose themselves while He fed them. "He commanded them (*i. e.*, His disciples) to make them all sit down by companies upon the green

grass, and they sat down." It is a beautiful picture, orderly, quiet, restful. And I commend it to all as containing a valuable suggestion as to how to get strong. If you want to get strong you will need to follow the method prescribed by Jesus. Do not take your meals on the run. If you have never considered the matter before, consider it now seriously, I beg of you. You will thank me in future years for forcing it upon your attention. Treat yourself rationally as Christ wishes you to treat yourself. Form good habits in this matter, for it is largely a question of habit; it is of the highest importance. These principles lie at the centre and foundation of life. Upon them depend health, strength, and happiness. Take time for the essential things. Sit down—and eat.

But not to dwell upon this thought, I wish to consider the truth that food is necessary for strength. This is a natural necessity. We are constructed on this plan. Our organism is an engine, and it can run only when there is fuel

in the furnace. There are, as we all know, various sorts of fuel. There are coal, and wood, and peat, and oil, and gas. Each has its own qualities. The question of foods is being reduced to a science. Chemical analysis separates and classifies the various foods according to the various elements which they contain and according to the various effects which they produce. There are starch foods, and sugar foods, and phosphorous foods. There are foods which produce fat, there are foods which produce bone, foods which produce muscle, foods which produce brain. The nourishing quality of foods varies amazingly. The potential of some is very small. They may be sweet and agreeable, but they will not support life. They are flummery rather than food. For example, watermelon would not be substantial enough for a steady diet. Whipped cream is delicious, but no one can live on it. Then, too, foods differ in their digestibility. Some are digested in one hour, and some hardly in four. The in-

valid can take beef-tea or milk; a very frail digestion can assimilate them. But even a strong man might well hesitate before venturing to taste the young lady's first loaf of bread. This whole question is a most interesting one, and is being recognized more and more as of great importance. The plumage of birds has been changed in color by alterations in their food. These well-established facts apply to human life. The foot-ball teams and boat crews at colleges have a particularly prescribed bill of fare. It is an expensive and carefully prepared regimen. It is well understood that good results depend upon the food taken. The man who would get strong must pay attention to this matter.

We are ready now, I think, to apply these general principles to the question of spiritual strength. The mind cannot get strong without food, and a great deal depends upon the kind of food taken. There are mental foods which make fat, and there are mental foods that make

muscle. The amount of nourishment contained in the various kinds differs greatly. There is the light novel which is like whipped cream. It is pleasant reading undoubtedly, but it is not beneficial. Taken as a steady diet it is ruinous. The mind fed solely on it becomes utterly strengthless and pitiably flimsy. There are multitudes to-day whose minds were never fed on anything stronger than summer fiction. This is good as a dessert, as the last course to a substantial meal. But, alas! for the mental life of any one who finds in such reading the sole staple of intellectual nourishment. Regarding the mind as an organism, there are certain things which we must give it to eat if we would make it strong. The staple of the mind's food is of course *truth*. This is what the mind hungers for. It is all the while searching for truth. In all its explorations, in all its activities, in all its sciences, and philosophies, and arts, it is reaching after truth. How it rejoices when it discovers any new truth or

fact. Such a discovery marks an epoch in its history. It feasts on that truth as a hungry man on bread. See, too, how strong it becomes after eating this food. How amazingly the mind of man increased in power after the discovery made by Sir Isaac Newton. Man's intellect fed on the law of gravitation; it grew; it ceased to be a child's intellect; it stood up and looked abroad. It outgrew its old foolish conceptions of the universe. It took grander views, it grasped larger ideas. It became strong because it was fed on truth. Truth is the "word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." For it man hungers, and only as he finds it is he blessed. "Ye shall know the truth," said Jesus, "and the truth shall make you free." It is amazing in its effects. It fills a mind with divine energy. Elijah tasted it and went in its strength forty days and forty nights. "Truth," the reality around you—feed your mind on that. The solemn mystery of the universe; the Infinite and the

Eternity in which you live and move and have your being; the silence which encircles all; the great laws which roll unceasingly; the splendid panorama of the stars; the strangeness of your little life which moves in the midst of such magnificence; the flow of time; the endlessness which enfolds us,—these are realities, this is truth. Feed your mind on that. Do not snatch a morsel and hurry on and forget it. Sit down and meditate. This is the food of the gods; it is spread profusely before you. Is it not a more tempting feast than the petty rivalries, and envyings, and false reports, and meannesses which the world offers you? “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.” No price is asked for this royal banquet. The *truth* is free for the poorest mind. The sublime reality spreads itself before you. Will you see it, or will you be blind to it? The splendid mystery of life is all around you. Will you consider it, or will you ignore it? Here is truth, unchangeable, the same forever.

Sit down and eat that and you will become strong mentally.

The food which the will requires is *a purpose*. A definite aim and object will give a will the strength of an army. "The double-minded man," says the proverb, "is unstable in all his ways." In such a man the will is fibreless, sinewless, nerveless. It has no energy, no vitality. It is a starved will. What it needs is a definite purpose. Give it that ; and feeding on that it will renew its strength, and surprise every one by its rapid and complete recuperation. You have often probably seen such transformations. A man may have been sitting listless and impotent ; suddenly he started up and became a factor in society, a positive force in the world. The change was caused by a purpose. He placed a definite object before his will, and his will fed on it and grew strong. I advise every young man to have an aim in life. The will within you needs it for food. It will nourish that will and renew its strength

day by day. Then, when you are weary and discouraged, you can sit down and take that purpose again into your soul, and lo! you will be strong. We cannot starve the inner life any more safely than we can starve the outer life. If either be left unfed it will suffer and perish. We cannot feed the body with spirit food, and we cannot feed the spirit with bodily food. Man cannot live by bread alone. That which satisfies the animal nature is only husks to the spirit nature. The inner man can be strong only when he is fed with the food which he requires.

Now I sum up all that can be said, when I say that Christ is the food for this inner man. He brings to the mind the truth for which it hungers. The invisible and undiscoverable things of God are manifested in His life and character. All of the Eternal Spirit that can be expressed in human conditions is expressed in Him. He is in Himself a revelation. When we see what He was, we see what God is. God is an Infinite and Eternal Christ. The last, the

deepest, the highest truths are expressed in His life and conduct and words. He is thus in Himself "the Truth." If we know how to look, we can find in Him "the deep things of God," the things which mighty men have desired to see, the truth for which the mind of man has hungered. Intelligently studying Him and meditating upon Him, we will gather from Him the food by which our mind will be strengthened. We will find that for our intellects, He is "the bread that came down from heaven whereof a man may eat and not die." For the will, too, He brings the essential nourishment. He fills a man's will with a great purpose, the desire to escape from evil, to overcome temptation, and to reach the grand liberty of a noble manhood. The moment Christ touches a life, He sets before it this aim. The life's one ambition is then to become a "son of God," great, magnanimous, true. The Christ brings this food to the will, and the will feeding on this purpose grows strong. In addition

to these ministrations and services, Christ imparts Himself to a life in a way which none can describe, and which only those who have experienced it can understand. He says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." He is the soul's food in a mystic and wonderful way. We take Him unto our hearts and by a hidden and mysterious working His strength becomes our strength. We live, and yet not we, but the Christ who liveth in us. We can do all things because He strengtheneth us. The mighty life of the vine is in the branch which has been grafted on. The power of Christ works within and saves us. This is the food by which our inner life can be made strong—Christ the messenger from God, Christ the Incarnation of Divinity, Christ the Saviour of the world. If we open our hearts to Him we will have the Life Eternal within us. Let us pause in the midst of our agitations and hurryings. Let us take time to meditate in calmness. Let us sit down and eat this food and we will be strong.

IV.
AIR.

“The breath of life.”

—GENESIS ii. 7.

AIR.

IN reading the account of man's creation, found in the Book of Genesis, we observe that at least two great steps are noted and distinguished by the author. First there is the formative period, "The Lord formed man of the dust of the ground." In this period worked all those moulding processes which brought man's body to its present shape. Then came the second step, God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." This was what may be called the inspirational period. God imparted something of His own essence to the earthy animal, and the man of dust became "a living soul." We are interested particularly in one truth which this description brings into prominence, the important part played by the "breath of life." It was, we may say, the atmosphere, which developed a living soul within

the human being. What a man becomes depends upon the air which he breathes. We have been considering the practical question, "How to get strong," and have noted three conditions upon which strength depends—exercise, rest, and food. To-night I purpose to consider a fourth condition, no less essential, namely, air. No man can become a living soul without "the breath of life."

The atmosphere which a man breathes exercises a determining influence upon his health and strength. Science has discovered remarkable facts about the atmosphere. I should be interested to dwell upon what I might call the *protecting* influence of the air. It is like a cushion wrapped around the earth defending it from many injuries. There are innumerable meteorites floating in space, masses of matter, probably mainly iron. These coming within the lines of the earth's attraction are drawn toward our planet. If there were no atmosphere around our world they would fall upon it with disas-

trous and devastating violence. Think what great havoc would be wrought if a meteor should dash itself into the midst of some densely populated city. Such calamities are prevented by the air. It is a dense medium and resists the forward motion of the meteor. The friction thus induced develops such heat that the meteor is dissipated in a flash of light. The atmosphere protects the world from injury. What would have been a blow becomes transformed into a heavenly radiance. In like manner the atmosphere around a man's life is a protection. Without such an atmosphere he is exposed to all the blows which the malice and inhumanity of the world love to strike. "Beware of men," said the Eternal Christ to His apostles. They will wound on no provocation, but simply because it is their nature to do so. They will hit from behind and from beneath, and alas ! for the unprotected life which is exposed to the tender mercies of the selfish and the sinful. The best of all protections is

an atmosphere. A life that is encircled with God's love dwells "in the secret place of the Most High," abides "under the shadow of the Almighty." God hides it secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues, and from the pride of man. There shall no evil befall it, and no plague shall come nigh its dwelling. It is secure, it is hidden with Christ in God. It can say, "The Lord is on my side, and I do not care what man shall do unto me." Of course, around it there will be the pride of man, that cold, self-satisfied brutality; and around it, too, will be the strife of tongues, that eternal clatter of scandal and gossip which is the very music of hell. But though these things encircle it, though stones are always flying, nevertheless, if it is bathed in an atmosphere of God's love, none of these things will move it, none of these things will come nigh it. That atmosphere will protect it from every assault; the blow will be dissipated before reaching the heart. Nay, it will become a very flash of light. And for that

life the night season will be made beautiful with radiant beamings. Instead of being harmed, it will be helped by the assault, for God will transform the intended injury into a blessing. A man cannot be strong in this world without such an atmosphere. If every arrow shot unkindly was able to reach its mark and rankle ; if every blow was able to go home and bruise ; if every stone was able to find the heart and cut, the man's life would be one excruciating torture. It is not a world to be unprotected in ; for, in it, even the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. Let us hide our souls in the secret and mystery of God's presence, and we will "not be afraid for the terror by night ; nor for the arrow that flieth by day ; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness ; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand may fall at our side, and ten thousand at our right hand, but it shall not come nigh us."

Another most interesting discovery of science

is that the atmosphere around the world secures for it the light and heat of the sun. What the solar energy may be in space we cannot tell. We know that, as we ascend lofty mountains, we come to the levels of eternal snow and abiding changeless cold. Where there is no atmosphere, there is no heat. The moon is a frozen, icy sepulchre. The same sun shines upon it that shines upon our world. Our world is warm and full of life, the moon is frigid and dead. The sun cannot help a planet unless that planet has an atmosphere. The parable is most instructive: the spiritual sun cannot help a soul unless that soul has an atmosphere. The same truth comes to two lives: in the one, it becomes a warming, quickening energy; that life is filled with beauty and song, is covered with countless flowers, and bears abundant harvests of fruit. The other life remains cold and dead, an icy sepulchre. What is the difference? Simply this: the one life has an atmosphere; the other life, like the moon, has none. Heavenly

energies cannot help us, unless the proper air encircles our soul. Faith and hope must be around us before God's power can warm and quicken. Without them the truth does not kindle a heart, but lies cold and sterile on a dead and icy soul. In this connection, therefore, the law is,—no strong life without proper atmosphere. The ministries of heaven are impotent, unless the soul has the necessary air.

Such truths as these are interesting and instructive ; but there are more central truths on which I desire to dwell. We, of course, understand that the atmosphere is essential for our life. We are organisms that breathe. We hardly realize how large a proportion of our supplies comes from the air. Only a fraction of a tree is drawn through the roots from the soil. Most of it is gathered through the leaves out of the air. The forest is not quarried out of the earth, it is condensed out of the atmosphere. The carbon in its timber came not from the ground, but from the air. This same atmosphere, through

our lungs, supplies elements by which our life is sustained and our body built up. A man can fast for forty days, but he must breathe all the time. He depends more absolutely and intimately upon the air than he does upon food. He is continually drawing upon it.

Playing thus, as it does, such an all-important part in the economy of man's life, it is one of the deciding factors in the problem which we are considering. The health and strength of a man depend upon the character and quality of the air which he breathes. Some air is invigorating, full of ozone, stimulating, reviving. To be in it a week is to get a new lease of life. It sends richness into the blood, elasticity into the muscles, electricity into the nerves. Such is the air which sweeps across the broad Atlantic, toying with the great rollers, kissing a crest of spray upon every wave, and stealing the secret of a delicious fragrance from the salt heart of the great sea. Such, too, is the air that nestles upon the mountain-top, and waits

for the rising sun upon the summits of the hills. In it are the coolness of the dawn, and the sweetness of the silence. It seems to have absorbed a sparkle from the stars, and a mysterious depth from its lonely vigils far above the world. On the other hand, some air is debilitating. It is flat and dead and empty. It seems as if it had been boiled. To breathe it is to become languid and enervated. It absorbs and subtracts energy from us instead of imparting energy to us. Air on hot, humid days often has this peculiarity. In large cities, too, it seems to be drained; its richness is used up. Thousands of chimneys pour alloy into its pure gold. It is tired out and cannot do half work. Then, too, some air is positively injurious. It is unwholesome like the air along some river beds, which sends chills through the frame and kindles fever in the system. It is poisonous, tainted it may be with sewer-gas, freighted with the effluvia of gutters, filled with the germs of various diseases. To breathe it is

to catch the infection. We might as safely fill our mouths with arsenic as our lungs with some air. The dangers from the atmosphere are invisible dangers, the pestilence flies on microscopic wings. We do not understand how much poison floats unseen around us. Modern science has a great deal to say about germs. Modern surgery concerns itself principally with these invisible enemies contained in the atmosphere. Every instrument is cleansed and re-cleansed before it is used, in order that it may be freed from the pollutions which the air has brought. The wounded flesh is guarded most carefully and kept as entirely separated as possible from the atmosphere, in order that the air may have no opportunity to contaminate with its poisons the cut. The result of an operation depends very largely upon the completeness of these precautions. If the air has a chance it will do mischief, for, though no one would suspect it, it is full of germs. And often when not prevented, it has sown death in a

wound. These are not morbid fancies, they are acknowledged facts of science and ought to make us thoughtful. When we remember that we take this air into our lungs, we see that it has unlimited opportunity to sow the seeds of disease at the very centre of our system. It has a chance to pollute the stream of life at its very source. It makes a tremendous difference what sort of air we breathe. One of the essential conditions of health is that we must breathe pure air. We cannot get strong if we live in bad atmospheres.

The problem of ventilation is one of the most practical and important, and at the same time one of the most imperfectly understood and most thoroughly unsolved problems of architecture. We know how to build enormously high towers; we know how to build rows of monotonous brick houses; we know how to build monstrous business blocks; we know how to build ungraceful and badly proportioned palaces; there are some who know

how to build truly tasteful and elegant homes ; but we do not know how to build a structure that shall be decently ventilated, in which it will be possible to get a breath of respectable air. The Egyptians knew how to erect pyramids, the Greeks knew how to construct temples perfect in their beauty, the Romans knew how to build aqueducts, the men of the Middle Ages were skilled in the art of raising majestic cathedrals ; but no generation and no nationality has solved the problem of ventilation. We still occupy buildings in which nothing short of a cyclone will produce a change of air, in which you must choose between dying of suffocation and dying of pneumonia. The one thing which our edifices lack to-day is "the breath of life," and fully nine-tenths of the maladies of men and women and children are due, I am convinced, to the impure air which they breathe in school, in society, and in their own homes. This is a vitally important matter, and, as a minister of the Gospel, I would enforce it upon

your attention. You cannot get strong without good air. If you live most of the time in bad air, of course you will be weak. If a commission could be appointed whose duty it should be to go from house to house and open windows every day, the health and the happiness of multitudes would be increased. Good air in the home, good air in the school, good air in the hall, good air in the church, good air in the office—this is worth more than paintings, or upholstering, or easy-chairs. We take the air into our lungs, it enters into us. Our first care should therefore be that it is as pure as possible.

All this is a parable worthy of our earnest consideration. There can be no mental strength without good air. Intellectual ventilation is an absolute necessity. The mental atmosphere is often most unwholesome. It is full of germs. One of the worst impurities is *gossip*. This is a very pestilence; it floats unseen, it multiplies itself. The mind that inhales the germ is likely

to catch the infection. What mental strength can any one have who lives in such air. The mind so encircled unavoidably catches the malaria. Farewell, then, to all broader, grander ideas. Truer thoughts are impossible to a brain having this malady. It can think only little things, understand only small feelings. It is unavoidably warped and provincial, it cannot know truth. The great need in society to-day is a pure mental atmosphere. In the home, in the drawing-room, nay, alas! in the church, the air is intellectually poisoned. It is full of gossip germs, to say nothing of any other impurities. Of course, to breathe such an atmosphere is to become mentally weak. Ventilation is needed. Now, I think, I have solved the problem of mental ventilation, and I will tell you my solution. The best ventilator is a great mind. A great mind will fill the air with great ideas, great thoughts, great truths; it will make the atmosphere bracing and delicious. That is what Plato, and Dante, and Shakespeare, and

Victor Hugo, and Dickens, and Thackeray, and George Eliot will do for you. The gossip in a house always decreases as the library increases. The mental atmosphere is pure in proportion to the number of great men who live in it. Small talk goes out at the window where Shakespeare comes in at the door. Scandal cannot live where such men as Carlyle, and Emerson, and Milton, and Wordsworth are present. The mental atmosphere ceases to be malarious when such minds act on it. They disinfect it. It no longer bears the pestilence ; it becomes filled with “ the breath of life.” If, therefore, any man really desires to breathe a pure mental atmosphere, let him fill it with great men. Around his intellect there will be great thoughts, great conceptions, great truths. Breathing such air, taking such elements into its lungs, his mind will grow strong.

In this connection I would say, that the Bible is a great ventilator for the mental atmosphere. The Bible is the work of the best minds of the

Hebrew race. It contains the best thoughts which those minds had when they were at their best and highest. Moses, and David, and Solomon, and Isaiah,—the Statesman, the Poet, the Philosopher, the Prophet,—let them fill the air you breathe with their truth, their aspiration, their wisdom, their visions, then your mental atmosphere will be like the wind from the great ocean of mystery, it will come rolling over great waves of thought, and there will be in it the tonic from the very essence of life. It will be like the air upon the hill-tops, having in it the freshness of heaven and the sparkle of the stars. The condition of the mind depends upon the air which it breathes, and no mind can get strong unless its atmosphere is full of “the breath of life.”

And now as I close, let me dwell for a moment upon the application of these truths to the human will. The will cannot get strong unless it breathes pure air. Here, too, there are countless germs. The atmosphere is tainted,

it is filled with temptations. There are temptations of selfishness, temptations of dishonesty, temptations of passion, temptations of appetite. The air of cities is peculiarly foul ; it is full, so to speak, of sewer-gas. The will breathes and catches the infection, we see drunkards and misers and defaulters and libertines. All these wills grew weak because they breathed bad air. They inhaled invisible poison, and when once within their lungs it injured their entire life. There are certain localities where the air is particularly foul. These germs of temptation are especially abundant at certain spots. In saloons, for example, and along some streets. Some professions and businesses are peculiarly dangerous. We always tremble for a life when it enters such atmospheres. The will can hardly escape the pestilence that broods there. "Lead us not unto temptation," the great Master taught His disciples to pray. The wise man stays as far as possible from these infected regions. If you desire a strong will, do not go where it will

be exposed to poison and breathe in pestilence. The tourist who desired to be strong physically would carefully avoid all countries where cholera prevailed, and would never think of visiting yellow fever districts. The will that breathes the air of saloons and slums will be certain to catch the infection. On the other hand, there are regions where the air is remarkably pure and invigorating. An invalid often regains his health and strength in a week by breathing the atmosphere of the mountains. Tyndal, the great scientist, staggered out of foggy London, overworked and broken down. He went to Switzerland and stood on glaciers and inhaled the air, cold over fields of eternal snow. He recovered rapidly. The pure air of the ice-peak conquered the infection of the city, he became again "a strong man." There are regions to which we can go where we can escape from the infection of temptation, and where our wills, though they are sick and weak, can become well and strong. Such a region is the mountain-

top of meditation and prayer ; many a will has come staggering to this spot, sick, full of the pestilence which it had caught below. Standing here upon the summit it has breathed great draughts of the keen, pure air encircling such serene exaltations, and with amazing rapidity it has regained its health. “Those that wait upon the Lord,” says the Psalmist, “shall renew their strength.” I do not care what diseases your will may have, the germs of every temptation may be festering within it. Your case is not hopeless. Your will may be renewed and made strong. You may yet be a man. There is a spot on this world where the air is pure, where the atmosphere holds within it “the breath of life.” Draw near unto this spot, and you shall escape. There is a Presence here who will not cast you out. There is no condemnation here. Here the air is full of the healing, life-giving spirit of Eternal Love. No matter what your disease may be, there is healing for it here. “Though your sins be as scar-

let, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

Here, while you commune with Him, God will breathe into your nostrils “ the breath of life,” and you will become a living soul.

V.
RELIGION.

“ The people that do know their God shall be strong.”

—DANIEL xi. 32.

RELIGION.

THERE are two types of religion. The one is the child of weakness, the other is the parent of strength. The one flees from the world, the other overcomes the world. The one makes hermits, the other makes heroes. The one cries, "Oh ! that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest ;" the other buckles on the whole armor of God and goes out to fight the good fight. The one is the religion of sentiment, the other is the religion of service. The two are not utterly and unapproachably separated. On the contrary, they are related, and the first is always expanding into the second. They are two great steps of one great experience. The man first comes to God in weakness, he flees for refuge from the conflicts in which he was being overcome. He hides himself in the Rock of Ages. He

casts himself for salvation upon God's love. That is the first step; in it the man is empty and weak, but while he is thus hiding in God, he is filled with energy, his strength is renewed. He goes back a new man to conquer the world, which had been conquering him. The first type of religion has borne its fruit in the second. Out of weakness the man has been made strong. This is of course the object and purpose of religion, to fill the human being with energy. "I am come," said Jesus, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Not to make hermits, but to make heroes; not to take them out of the world, but to keep them from evil while they are in the world, is the purpose with which God visits men. The knowledge of God is not enervating or despair-producing; it is vitalizing, invigorating, energizing. To touch God and to be touched by God is to be filled with life and power. As the prophet Daniel expressed it, "They that do know their God shall be strong."

To-night I close my brief series of addresses on athletics. I have given several answers to the question, "How to get strong," and have endeavored to show how essential are the parts played by exercise, rest, food, and air. There is one final word to be spoken, and I desire to speak that word to-night. The strength of a man depends closely upon the attitude of his inner-life. If that inner-life is groveling, or undecided, or ununited, or two-faced, the man will necessarily be weak. On the other hand, if the inner-life is on its feet, with a single eye and a sincere resolve, it will be full of power.

The effect of the inner upon the outer, of the spirit upon the body, can hardly be exaggerated. It would almost be accurate to say that our bodies are balloons. When full of spirit they are buoyant and potent; when empty of spirit they are collapsed and dead. It is the spirit within the man that moves his arm, looks through his eye, hears through his ear, and thinks through his brain. It is the spirit that

wills, the spirit that energizes the whole. And the state of that inner spirit life determines the strength or weakness of the man. Certain moods will give him ten-fold power. Indignation, for example, may make a giant out of a very pigmy. So, too, enthusiasm is the key to victory. Let the inner-life be full of enthusiasm and the body will do great deeds, and perform almost miracles. The great commanders understood this. Napoleon enthused his soldiers, and so his army became invincible. They crossed impassable mountains and conquered overwhelming odds. It was not in mere flesh and blood to do what they did. It was not the muscle alone, it was enthusiasm in and through the muscle that dragged great cannon over the Alps. His addresses to his soldiers set them on fire within. In this way poets have wrought revolutions. They have touched "the soul's secret spring," the inner-life has been enthused; then that inner-life working through men's bodies has lifted mount-

ains and overturned the world. These are only examples; the principle which they illustrate is being recognized and acknowledged more and more. At the very centre of the problem of strength lies the condition of the inner-life. Arms mighty for the battle, feet swift for the race, eyes keen to discern, ears alert to detect—these are attainments to be desired. And like the fruit on the tree, they are the outgrowth of the inner-life. If this inner-life grovels, the burden cannot be carried by the man. If this inner-life faces two ways he cannot win the victory. It depends upon this inner-life whether he shall be weak or strong. Its attitude is the determining factor. If it is in one condition, the man will be almost irresistible. If it is in another condition, he will be impotent. “The people that do know their God shall be strong.” When the inner-life is in this condition, when it stands in this attitude, when it knows its God, then the man will be strong. This, then, is the final word which I desire to speak to-

night. The man must be alive within or he cannot be strong without.

1. Man's spirit must have its loins girt about and its lights burning, it must have its energies tightened and under control, and it must have its faculties wide-awake. So much depends upon this alertness of attitude. Not a few are more than half asleep; their powers are not at their command, they are relaxed, inattentive, slow. They are like a house at night, the lights are extinguished or burning dimly, the faculties are not radiant, the servants have retired, the master of the house himself is in bed. The powers are not fulfilling their functions, the will itself is droning in slumber. Ring the bell of such a house, there will be no response; at last after repeated efforts the inmates will be aroused and there will be a sleepy answer to the summons. This is no unfair picture of some human beings. Now, the house when it is in this condition is, so to speak, at its weakest. Those are the moments when marauders

can most easily secure entrance and work havoc. The house is most exposed and most impotent. So, too, of the man when his inner-life is in this slothful condition, he is most weak. Then it is that the thief breaks through and steals and destroys. Then it is that he himself blunders and fails. Few men have been defeated when they were at their best. Some cloud stole over their consciousness, some weight pressed upon their mind, they fell into a sort of mesmerized inactivity. Their faculties burned dim, flickered, some went out; the girdings of their loins were relaxed; for the moment their right hand forgot its cunning. There was not now the necessary promptness in their decision, nor the necessary wisdom in their choice. They struck, but the blow did not go home. They struggled like Samson, but they failed. They may have fallen into this condition through overwork; many a man has done that, worked too hard and put himself at the mercy of the world. They may have fallen into it through

sickness. They may have fallen into it through sin. Sin is the monstrous power that extinguishes the lights and consumes the energies with sloth. Under its devastation the man staggers; he who had been victorious becomes impotent. But whatever the cause may be, the result is the same. The man whose inner life is in this condition is weak.

The man who knows God, on the other hand, must be awake. It is only as his every faculty burns at its brightest, that he can know God. It is only as every energy is tightly held by his will that he can know God. His perception must have the keenest edge, his reason must be filled with clearest intuitions. He must be at his best, on his high places, most a man, or he cannot know God. Indeed, this is exactly the experience of conversion; I would define conversion as *a waking up all over*. Before conversion the human being is like the Prodigal, under a spell that hides half of the truth from his eyes. He is held of a delusion, a cap-

tive of the prince of the powers of the air. He does not see that he is a poor outcast, in a wilderness among swine. Then occurs his conversion; he comes to himself, he wakes up all over. He says, "I am perishing with hunger, I will go to my Father." The lights of his life are now burning, the powers of his life are under his control. His loins are girt about; he knows his God; he is strong. My mission, as a minister, is to rouse the inner-lives of men; to light extinguished lamps; to trim flickering flames; to rally the will to its authority; to stimulate perception, and vitalize understanding. My message to every spirit is, "Stand on thy feet, and God will speak to thee. Rise, play the man, gird up thy loins, light thy lamps. Awake! know thy God, and thou shalt be strong."

2. The inner-life must have faith in it or the man cannot be strong. A man cannot know God without faith. Indeed, my definition of faith would be, the soul's cognition or percep-

tion of God. The spirit has its intuitions, its perceptions as truly and as clearly as the intellect. The soul has an eye. Faith is a soul-sense, it is the soul's discerning of God; and this sense must be active in the inner-life or the man cannot be strong. It is essential that there shall be faith within him. We reach in this the very heart of the matter. Faith in the soul is the source of strength, and when there is no faith there is only weakness. Contrast the believing with the unbelieving ages. The former have been irresistible, the latter impotent. In the former there has appeared the splendor of David's kingdom, in the latter the desolation of the captivity. The former have been full of positive energy, the latter have been possessed by enervation and inactivity. Believing races have been progressive, unbelieving races have been stagnant. It is the men of belief who have shaken the world. It was this that made the Ironsides of Cromwell so invincible. It was this that enabled the

Puritans to establish their community in inhospitable New England. When this is in a man's soul, whatever else may or may not be true of him, we can be sure that he will be strong. We have only to examine our own experience to find these truths emphasized and endorsed. The moments when unbelief held us have been the moments when we were at our worst and at our weakest. It was then that we were blind to truth, it was then that we fainted before the adversity. It was then that we played the coward, then that we committed the sin. Unbelief sapped our energy, oppressed our spirit, consumed our strength. We are ashamed of those hours. We wish they could be blotted from the calendar and out of remembrance. It seems as if in them our being collapsed and we ceased to be capable of anything noble. And then how like a full incoming tide, filling our nature once more with the freshness and volume of the ocean of life, was the return of faith. We awoke out of delusion. Once again our facul-

ties shed their radiance, once again our powers yielded to our control. We felt alive from the dead. Great things seemed possible once more. We became strong, because faith was in our souls. Science recognizes the enormous power of belief upon and within a man. Looking at it from a purely material standpoint, the higher nerve-centres in the brain exercise a tremendous influence over the system. The source of strength lies in them rather than in the muscle. The arms of Samson were just as massive, his shoulders were just as herculean when the Philistines captured him, as when he had burst the bonds like tow. The only change was an invisible change, so to speak, in these hidden nerve-centres. The muscles did not do their work now, because the spiritual energy did not flash through them. The attitude of this inner-life is the determining condition. If there is unbelief in it, the man will be weak. If there is faith in it, the man will be strong. This for you will be the secret of strength in

daily duty, in monotonous tasks, in weary disappointments, in painful griefs, in manifold temptations. You can be brave through them all, you can be happy through them all, you can be exultant through them all, you can be victorious through them all. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even Faith. Have faith in God. Let belief in the Eternal occupy your soul and you can never fail. "The people that do know their God shall be strong."

3. The inner-life must have hope within it. Hopefulness is exhilaration, inspiration, enthusiasm. So long as there is hope in the soul, there is strength in the man. The faintest spark of hope is enough to vitalize a human being. We read with awe and wonder of what some prisoners have done in their imprisonment. How they have filed great bars through with a piece of watch-spring, working for years upon a single bar. How they have excavated stones and tunnelled through thick walls with infinite patience and perseverance. What was

it that nerved them for such a task? What was it that strengthened them for such labors? Simply the hope of escape which they cherished in their souls. It was hope that animated them, hope that encouraged them, hope that gave them purpose and energy. So long as this hope was in them, they were powers, forces working toward an end. If this hope had vanished out of their souls, they would have collapsed and become impotent in despair. Byron, in his wonderful poem, "The Prisoner of Chillon," has depicted with the pencil of genius the steps by which a prisoner gradually lost all hope. How at first there was the yearning eagerness, the cherishing of expectation. How when that failed, there was the holding fast of even remote possibilities, the hoping against hope. How at last that died, the man became dead in despair; and how when liberation did come, it found him utterly impotent and indifferent.

“ It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count—I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote ;
At last men came to set me free,
I asked not why, and recked not where
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are : even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh.”

Ah ! we, too, are prisoners in a prison ; the world is a prison—pain, and suffering, and grief, and loneliness are like iron bars and stone walls round about us, shutting us in. So long as there is hope of escape in our hearts, hope of finding something better, no effort is too severe, we labor with patience and perseverance. We file through iron griefs, we tunnel through stony sufferings ; the thought of a larger liberty, the thought of a better life, the hope of heaven, make us strong. But let that hope die, and

there will be neither power nor life, neither ambition nor enthusiasm. Hope is the bright spark that can fill a human being with radiance. Hope can kindle the energies, and send the tingling currents of activity through every vein. Is there hope in the soul? Prison walls are then only highways opening to joy. Exertion is progress. Struggle is glorious. Pains are steps to victory. Hope is the ruddy promise of the new day, it is the dawning that blushes upon the horizon, makes the clouds splendid, and the world like a dream of the Almighty, a dream opening into glad reality. Of all the rich treasures, the treasure of hope is one of the most precious. The man who holds hope in his inner-life will be strong.

Whence shall we obtain this hope? There is one unfailing source—knowledge of God. The man who knows his God will be a hopeful man. To know God is to feel beneath the everlasting arms, it is to dwell in the secret place of the Most High. What room for de-

spair is there that rests in such security? The arrow may fly by day, the pride of man may work by night, the strife of tongues may rage, the pestilence may walk in darkness. Bathed in peace, he will care for none of these things. A sweet hope will sing in his heart and make liquid music while the discord rolls around him. In addition to this, if he knows his God, he will have learned from experience how God rules over and above all. How He can bring brightness out of shadows, and calmness out of storms. How He can make all things work together for good. The man who knows his God will not fear though the earth be removed. He will hope in God with a hope that maketh not ashamed, a hope that fadeth not away. The day of adversity will come to him, but he will calmly enter into it and calmly emerge from it at last. He will be mightier than enmity, mightier than persecution, mightier than falsehood, mightier than misfortune, mightier than death. He will smile and sing, and make

sweet melody in his heart when these things increase around him. There will be a hope in his soul which will make him invincible. He will be a mystery to the archers; they will shoot and yet not harm or disturb him. He will be a mystery to the vipers; they will fasten on him, but he will shake them off. There will be something within him which the world cannot quench or break. His life will be hidden with Christ. He will know his God, and therefore he will be strong.

Such, then, is the condition of the inner-life which will assure strength to the outer-life. When the inner-life knows its God, its loins will be girt about and its lights burning, it will have faith abiding in it and hope burning in its centre. When this inner-life occupies such an attitude and is in such a condition, weakness is an impossibility, the man will be panoplied in might.

4. In addition to all this, the man who knows his God will be strong, because his God will fill

him with Divine life. To know God is to hold intimate communion with Him; it is to be vitally united with the Most High. We know Him when His Presence touches our soul, when there are contact and actual relationship. The branch, so to speak, knows the vine, when it is grafted in. Then the branch is strong, because the vine's life flows through it. It is full of a vitality not its own. Such is the condition of the man who knows his God. He is, we may say, grafted into God. The life of God flows through his individuality. "This is Life Eternal," said Jesus, "to know the only true God." The inner-life of the man who knows God is in immediate personal contact with God. He is strong because he is filled with God's strength. "I live," said St. Paul, "yet not I, but the Christ who liveth in me." "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." "I am not alone," said Jesus, "for the Father is with me." I desire, in closing, to point out to each one this secret of strength. "The king-

dom of heaven is within you." There is an invisible door in your inmost life; through that door Divine energy can pulse into your individuality; if you open that door you will be filled with power. At the centre of your soul there is a chamber, and if you will put Christ in that chamber, a new life, the Life Eternal, will throb through you; you will know what it is to be "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." How strong we might be: strong for duty, strong for conflict, strong for sorrow, strong for care, strong for disappointment, strong for pain, strong for opposition, strong for loneliness, strong for betrayals and desertions, strong for life with all its vicissitudes, strong for death with all its darkness and silence. This is the secret of strength, this is the source of energy. If we have this in our inner-life, we will run and not be weary. Seek this first: this is the Pearl of Great Price; it is the one thing that cannot be taken away from you.

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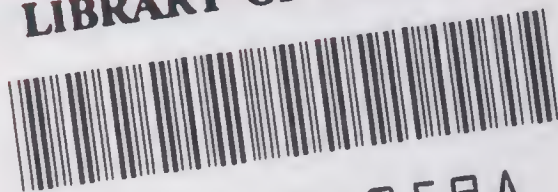
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